

## APPENDIX D. PREPARATION OF REPORTS TO CONGRESS

### General Remarks

Reports to Congress that originate in authorization acts (e.g., SAFETEA, TEA-21 and ISTEA) are coordinated within FHWA by the Office of Legislation and Strategic Planning (HPLS). The authorization act reports are sent to the HPLS Reports Coordinator who will keep a log of reports received, assure that the Office of Policy reviews the reports for policy and legislative implications, and will track the reports through the review process until signed by the Secretary of Transportation.

Reports to Congress that originate in appropriation acts are coordinated within FHWA by the Office of Budget and Finance (HABF).

Contact the appropriate office for instructions on preparation of a Report to Congress.

### Congressional Reports Manual of Style

#### Acronyms

- When using acronyms, be sure to spell out the word and enclose the acronym in parenthesis the first time the word appears in the document. Do not enclose an acronym in parentheses if it will not be used again in the document.
- The abbreviation “U.S.” is used when it precedes the word Government or the name of a Government organization or when used as an adjective. “United States” is spelled out when used as a noun.

**Example:** (Adjective) U.S. foreign policy is a major issue during the debates.

(Noun) The United States has the safest road system anywhere.

- When using organizational acronyms, avoid using “the” preceding the acronym unless the acronym is used as a modifier.

**Example:** OST and the SLSDC Administrator

- When an acronym begins with *a, e, f, h, i, m, n, o, r, s, x*, or the indefinite article “an” is used.

**Example:** An NPRM is expected to be published in the **Federal Register** shortly.

- Beginning a sentence with an acronym is acceptable.

**Example:** The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is part of the Department of Transportation. FHWA administers the Federal-aid Highway Program.

## Capitalization

- The words “Government,” “Nation,” “Administration,” and “Federal” are capitalized when referring to the U.S. Government; adjectives such as “federally” and “nationally” are not capitalized.

**Example:** TEA-21 helps the Nation compete in the global economy.

The federally funded program requires congressional approval.

The Department is known nationally for its transportation policies.

- “State” is capitalized when referring to a specific state, such as the State of Massachusetts; when referring to one of the 50 states, it is not capitalized.

**Example:** Copies were distributed at no charge to state agencies.

- “Department,” when used to describe the Department of Transportation, is capitalized; “departmental” is not. The same rule applies to “Congress”/“congressional” and “Secretary”/“secretarial” and “Federal”/“federally.”
- References to the seasons-spring, summer, fall, or winter-are not capitalized.

## Hyphenation

- **Compound Words/Numbers**

**Example:**

### **Incorrect**

anti-lock  
decision-making  
non-occupant  
co-sponsored  
state-wide  
non-profit  
county-wide  
anti-theft  
re-examine  
high-speed  
mid-continent  
multi-purpose  
long-term/short-term  
drug-testing

### **Correct**

antilock  
decisionmaking  
nonoccupant  
cosponsored  
statewide  
nonprofit  
countywide  
antitheft  
reexamine  
high speed  
midcontinent  
multipurpose  
long term/short term  
drug testing

- The following words are hyphenated:  
5-ton trucks                      state-mandated compliance  
1-day bench trial                pay-as-you-go approach  
FHWA-sponsored event        part-time/full-time

- Use a hyphen between the elements of compound numbers from twenty-five to ninety-nine and in adjective compounds with a numerical first element.

**Example:** twenty-one; twenty-first; 6-footer; 3-to-1 ratio; 10-minute delay.

## **Footnotes**

- Use the Microsoft Word footnote feature to correctly place footnotes on a page.
- Footnotes to charts, graphs, and other illustrations are to be placed immediately beneath such illustrative material.

## **Format**

- Begin all lines of text at the left margin.
- Do not right justify margins.
- Do not indent paragraphs
- Do not refer to preliminary or interim data in reports; use the actual data
- Spell out the word “percent” instead of using the “%” symbol in body of text; however, the % symbol is acceptable in charts and tables.
- Be consistent when using bullets, dashes or stars; use one or the other throughout the document. When using the bullet, dash, or star, type flush to the left margin with two spaces following the bullet, dash, or star. The first letter following each bullet, dash, or star should be lower-case.

**Example:** “Of particular interest are:

- typing financial documents
  - communicating requirement.”
- Do not leave headings or single sentences alone at the bottom or top of pages; sentences should contain at least two lines at the beginning or end of pages.
- Ensure that charts, graphs, and tables are printed straight on the page.
- Charts and tables referred to in reports should follow as closely as possible behind the text where mentioned; if the chart or table does not immediately follow the text, please indicate the page number on which the charts or tables appear.
- Avoid referring to “the agency” in sentences; refer to the organization by name.

## **Legislative Citation**

- “Et al.” and “et seq.” are set in small caps; a period is placed only after al. and seq.

- Legal references should be typed exactly as they appear in legislation.

**Example:** P.L. 102-240, Section 1040 (d) (1)  
Title 49, U.S.C., Section 308 (c)

- Titles of legal cases are italicized, except the v.

**Example:** *United Steelworkers of America Local 123 et al. v. Skinner et al.*

## Mailing

- Provide the appropriate envelopes or labels, properly addressed, for mailing.
- Normally, S-10 will mail reports to Congress after signature if the report package contains the proper envelopes/ mailing labels; however, if report packages do not contain proper envelopes/ mailing labels, or the report is to be professionally printed and bound, the report will be returned to the originating organization.

## Numbers

- Numerals one through nine are spelled out; figures are used for 10 and above.
- Related numbers appearing at the beginning of a sentence separated by no more than three words, are treated alike; rephrase sentences to avoid beginning with figures.

**Example:** Fifty or sixty more miles away is snowclad Mount McKinley.

Mount McKinley is 50 or 60 more miles away.

- When 2 or more numbers appear in a sentence and 1 of them is 10 or more, figures are used for each number; however, a sentence should still not begin with numerals.

**Example:** Twenty-three carriers with 301 aircraft received extensions of 1 to 2 days.

- When referring to percentages, use figures only and spell out percentage.

**Example:** 1-percent increase over 2000.

- Units of measurement and time, actual or implied, are expressed in figures.

**Example:** 5-year plan; 1 week to go; 8 by 12 inches; 8.5 billion; 3-year-old.

- Proper noun names, dates, or numbers do not stand alone.

**Example:** Incorrect: The meeting was held on July 6, 2003

Correct: The meeting was held on July 6, 1992.

## Official File Copies

- Do not submit official file copies when submitting the report package to OST.

## Process

- Ensure that all relevant parts of the statutory language which require the report are included in the package transmitted to OST.
- If a report is overdue, update references to timeframes that have expired. References to dates in the future may be overtaken by events if the time for clearance is not factored in by drafters and considered by reviewers.

**Example:** If a report is written in January, but does not get cleared until July and contains sentence, “An NPRM will be drafted in the spring of 2004,” this sentence needs to be updated since spring has passed before the report is finalized.

## Punctuation

- Use a comma preceding the final element in a series, such as and or, to indicate the termination of the series. (Preference only, but be consistent.)

**Example:** The Department of Transportation is composed of 10 operating administrations, including the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Railroad Administration.

- The semicolon is not used where a comma will suffice.
- Place a comma after the year in complete dates within sentences.

**Example:** Concerns were expressed at a May 23, 2001, hearing before the committee.

- Use commas to set off clauses within a sentence.

**Example:** The Department of Transportation, which is based in Washington, DC, is composed of 10 operating administrations.

## Spacing

- There are no spaces between dashes and the words surrounding them.

**Example:** The U. S. economy at all levels--local, regional, and national--is expanding.

- Be sure to add two spaces after a colon or period, two lines between single-spaced paragraphs, and three lines between double-spaced paragraphs.

## Table of Contents

- If the report is voluminous and/or contains numerous acronyms, be sure to include a Table of Contents and/or a list of acronyms.
- When listing chapters, tables, or figures followed by a number and period, the periods are aligned to the right.

**Example:**     I. Budget Authority  
                    II. Permanent Civilian Employment

## Transmittal Letter

- In transmittal letters, reports are “titled” not “entitled.” Begin all letters as follows:

**Example:**     Enclosed is the Department of Transportation’s Fiscal year 2001 annual report titled “Hazardous Materials Transportation.”

- The last sentence of the letters lists other Congressmen/women who will be receiving copies.

**Example:**     A copy of this report has also been sent to the President of the Senate.  
  
                    A copy of this report has also been sent to the Chairman and Ranking  
                    Minority Members, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

## For Reports Transmitted by the Secretary

- Using Secretarial letterhead, transmittal letters addressed to Congress, the President, and to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Members of Committees are addressed as follows:

The Honorable Richard B. Cheney  
President of the Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. President:  
Salutation: Sincerely yours,

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:  
Salutation: Sincerely yours,

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment and Public Work  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:  
Salutation: Sincerely yours,

The Honorable David R. Obey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Obey:  
Salutation: Sincerely yours,

- The Secretary's salutation is typed at the center point of the letterhead, with five blank lines between "Sincerely yours" and the name of the Secretary.